

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 RSC-01 /023 W

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R 211142Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0007

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FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY BROWN FROM AMBASSADOR KINTNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS/ SNAR, TH

SUBJ: FUNDING FOR YOUTH TREATMENT CENTER

1. I BELIEVE YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE YOUTH TREATMENT CENTER (YTC) WHICH OPENED IN BANGKOK IN EARLY 1973 UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL ACTION OFFICE ON DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS (SOADAP). ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS CENTER GREW OUT OF THE CRISIS SITUATION WE FACED IN 1972. AT THAT TIME 10 PCT OF THE STUDENT BODY OF THE HIGH AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (ISB) WERE USING HEROIN IN VARIOUS DEGREES. SEVERAL AMERICAN TEENAGERS DIED FROM DRUG OVERDOSE. AT THAT TIME OUR ONLY OPTION WAS TO SEND OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON AN EMERGENCY BASIS THOSE FAMILIES WHOSE CHILDREN WERE EXPERIMENTING WITH DANGEROUS DRUGS. WITH THE HELP OF SAODAP, WE ESTABLISHED THE YTC TO HANDLE THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF ADOLESCENT ADJUSTMENT, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ACTUAL OR POTENTIAL DRUG ABUSERS.

2. THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM IS SHOWN BY THE FACT THERE ARE NEARLY 1000 STUDENTS IN THE HIGH AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS AT ISB AND RUAM RUDEE. SINCE FORMATION OF THE YTC WE HAVE HAD NO DRUG RELATED DEATHS AMONG AMERICAN TEENAGERS AND WE HAVE HAD TO SEND FAR FEWER FAMILIES OUT OF THAILAND. THOSE WITH SERIOUS PROBLEMS WHO DO NOT RESPOND TO TREATMENT HERE ARE RETURNED TO THE U.S., BUT A TREATMENT PROGRAM IS ARRANGED FOR THEM. THE YTC HAS BEEN EXTREMELY USEFUL IN PROVIDING INDIVIDUAL,
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GROUP AND FAMILY COUNSELLING. IT HAS SERVED AS A RESOURCE

FOR DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO YOUTH PROBLEMS
AMONG SCHOOLS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OTHER YOUTH RELATED
ACTIVITIES.

3. THE YTC HAS THUS FAR BEEN FUNDED BY GRANTS FROM SAODAP
AND BY CONTRIBUTIONS ON A FAIR SHARE BASIS FROM DOD, AID,
USIS AND STATE. AS YOU KNOW, SAODAP GOES OUT OF BUSINESS ON
JUNE 30 AND, AS THINGS NOW STAND, WE LOSE AN IMPORTANT FUNDING
AND SUPPORT SOURCE FOR OUR YOUTH TREATMENT CENTER. NO ONE
IS YET WILLING TO MOVE INTO THE VOID AND PROVIDE THE ESSENTIAL
SUPPORT WE NEED.

4. THERE IS A CLEAR NEED TO CONTINUE THIS CENTER FOR ANOTHER
YEAR OR SO. DRUG ABUSE AMONG U.S. DEPENDENTS, FOLLOWING AN
INITIAL DECLINE AFTER THE DEATHS IN 1972, IS NOW ON THE IN-
CREASE AGAIN. FOR THE FIRST TIME, HEROIN MAINLINING HAS
BEEN DOCUMENTED. FOUR TENNAGERS HAVE BEEN DETOXIFIED IN LOCAL
HOSPITALS IN RECENT MONTHS.

5. LOCAL STUDIES AS WELL AS SURVEYS BY VISITORS FROM
WASHINGTON, INCLUDING DR. DUPONT, ALL ATTEST TO THE DEPTH
AND PERVASIVENESS OF THE DRUG PROBLEM HERE. HEROIN IS HIGH
GRADE, CHEAP AND EASILY AVAILABLE. OTHER LIFE-ENDANGERING
DRUGS ARE AVAILABLE WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION. THE THAI
THEMSELVES ARE ENCOUNTERING GREAT DIFFICULTY IN THEIR
EFFORTS TO COPE WITH THEIR OWN DRUG ABUSERS.

6. THE COUNSELLING SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL ARE EFFECTIVELY WORKING WITH TRADITIONAL ADOLESCENT
PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, THE SCHOOL AUTHORITIES HAVE TOLD ME THAT
THE YTC IS THE SOLE EXISTING FACILITY IN BANGKOK CAPABLE OF
DEALING WITH THE SERIOUS EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS OF YOUTH WHICH
OFTEN RESULT IN DRUG ABUSE. A PROFESSIONAL STAFF
SPECIALIZING IN YOUTH AND FAMILY TREATMENT IS CONSIDERED TO
BE ESSENTIAL IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING HERE.

7. I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS SITUATION, AND I BELIEVE
IT MOST IMPORTANT THAT THE SERVICES OF THE YTC CONTINUE TO
BE AVAILABLE TO OUR COMMUNITY. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AMERICAN
EMPLOYEES HEALTH ASSOCIATION, THE PARENT COMMUNITY ORGANIZA-
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TION UNDER WHICH THE YTC OPERATES, HAS JUST WRITTEN TO ME TO
APPEAL FOR MY ASSISTANCE IN PROBIDING THE MEANS TO KEEP THE
YTC FROM GOING OUT OF EXISTENCE THIS COMING JUNE. SHE
HAS UNDERSCORED THE URGENCY OF THE MATTER IN HER LETTER.
QUOTE...THE SECOND PART OF OUR CRISIS SITUATION
IS THAT CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE CENTER IS IN JEOPARDY.
AT A TIME WHEN THE CONCENTRATED EFFORTS OF THE SCHOOL
COUNSELLORS AND ADMINISTRATION AND THE STAFF OF THE YOUTH

TREATMENT CENTER SHOULD BE DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO WORKING WITH THE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WHO NEED HELP, THESE SAME INDIVIDUALS ARE HAVING TO CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE THREAT OF CLOSURE OF THE CENTER AND WITH TRYING TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO ASSURE FUNDING FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR...

IT SEEMS, THEREFORE, PARTICULARLY TRAGIC THAT THE CENTER SHOULD BE CLOSED IN A FEW MONTHS DUE TO LACK OF FUNDING, AND THAT THE STAFF WILL BE ACCEPTING OTHER JOBS FOR JULY 1975 ONWARDS, UNLESS WE HAVE A COMMITMENT FOR THE 1975-76 FISCAL YEAR BY FEBRUARY 15TH. END QUOTE. AUTHORITIES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AND RUAM RUDEE SCHOOL HAVE ALSO STRONGLY URGED THAT THE YTC BE CONTINUED.

8. WITH THE CLOSURE OF SAODAP, IT APPEARS THAT THE PROBLEM SHIFTS TO US. THE "FEDERAL STRATEGY FOR DRUG ABUSE AND DRUG TRAFFIC PREVENTION", PREPARED FOR THE PRESIDENT BY THE STRATEGY COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE DRUG ABUSE OFFICE AND TREATMENT ACT OF 1972 GIVES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE THE QUOTE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR COORDINATING DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS FOR DEPENDENTS OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RESIDING ABROAD, WHILE THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TREATMENT PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY DEPENDENTS. END QUOTE.

9. I TURN TO YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR CENTRAL ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MATTERS AFFECTING ALL U.S. PERSONNEL OVERSEAS. THE OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN ACTING AS EXECUTIVE AGENT TO SUPPORT THE YTC AND HAS ALL THE ESSENTIAL DATA ON THE PROJECT. I WILL SEND A SEPARATE MESSAGE TODAY ON OUR PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING THE YTC AFTER JUNE 30. IF YOU THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, DR. GLASSER, HEAD OF THE YTC, WILL TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON TO ASSIST IN WHATEVER WAY YOU THINK APPROPRIATE.

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10. I HOPE WE HAVE YOUR SUPPORT IN KEEPING THIS IMPORTANT FACILITY FUNCTIONING AND WILL BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE US IN PINNING DOWN THE NECESSARY FUNDS. TIME IS IMPORTANT SINCE, AS NOTED ABOVE, KEY YTC STAFF MEMBERS WILL BE LINING UP NEW JOBS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS IF WE ARE NOT ABLE TO ASSURE THEM THAT THE YTC WILL CONTINUE THROUGH FY '76. I WOULD MUCH APPRECIATE AN EARLY REPLY.

11. YOU MIGHT WISH TO SHARE THIS MESSAGE WITH AMBASSADOR VANCE WHO VISITED THE YTC DURING HIS VISIT HERE LAST FALL. KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: YOUTH, FUND ALLOTMENT, DRUG TREATMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO01139
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750022-0778
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750135/aaaabeqf.tel
Line Count: 166
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <20 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FUNDING FOR YOUTH TREATMENT CENTER
TAGS: SNAR, TH, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006